

MuckRock News
DEPT MR 52238
411A Highland Ave
Somerville, MA 02144-2516
52238-11896979@requests.muckrock.com

Environmental Protection Agency
FOIA Office
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue Northwest
Washington, DC 20004

April 9, 2018

This is a follow up to a previous request:

To Whom It May Concern:

I am filing a Freedom of Information Act request for any notices of pay raises sent to the following EPA employees: Sarah Greenwalt, Millan Hupp, Lincoln Ferguson, and Sydney Hupp. Please include any medium by which EPA staff are typically informed of changes to their pay, such as emails, memoranda, or letters. Please search from March 13, 2017 to April 6, 2018.

I would prefer the request be filled electronically, by e-mail attachment if available or CD-ROM if not. Please produce the records on a rolling basis; at no point should the search for – or deliberation concerning – certain records delay the production of others that the agency has already retrieved and elected to produce.

I respectfully request that you waive all fees in connection with this request as provided by 5 U.S.C. § 552(a)(4)(A)(iii). The Sierra Club is a national environmental nonprofit with no commercial interest in obtaining the requested information. Instead, our organization intends to analyze and disseminate the requested information free of charge so that the public can meaningfully participate in debates over proper personnel management practices happening at the EPA and other federal agencies.

The subject matter of the requested records is likely to contribute significantly to public understanding of the operations and activities of the government would help answer a contested issue amongst federal employees. This information would contextualize a major report by the Atlantic (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2018/04/pruitt-epa/557123/>) that two staff members were effectively given raises by reappointment via the Safe Drinking Water Act. Administrator Pruitt claimed that he found out about the raises last week (<http://www.foxnews.com/transcript/2018/04/05/epa-chief-pruitt-addresses-criticism-in-fox-news-interview.html>), but that is contradicted by two unnamed EPA officials and a White House official in the Washington Post (<https://wapo.st/2uMjjp7>).

The Sierra Club and its supporters have demonstrated interest and expertise in the subject area. The healthy and productive operation of the EPA is of great concern to us, and we have weighed in repeatedly regarding policies, ethics, and spending priorities that we believe would negatively impact the EPA's mission.

In addition to the public interest fee waiver, I ask to be properly categorized as a representative of the

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news media. The bulk of my professional duties at the Sierra Club entails planning and writing content about public policy, including composing mass communications to our followers, analyzing FOIA responses, and coordinating press outreach. I have previously written about the federal government's work to reorganize its staff:

<https://sierraclub.org/planet/2017/05/trump-admin-policies-leave-700-cdc-jobs-vacant>
<https://sierraclub.org/planet/2017/04/hiring-freeze-prevented-epa-filling-hundreds-jobs>

This work, supplemented by Freedom of Information Act requests, was covered in major media outlets:

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/to-your-health/wp/2017/05/19/nearly-700-vacancies-at-cdc-because-of-trump-administration-hiring-freeze/>
<http://www.cnn.com/2017/04/13/politics/epa-hiring-freeze/index.html>

The Sierra Club has the ability and intention to disseminate the information it receives through this request. The information may be shared through emails to an audience reaching into the millions, Facebook and Twitter posts reaching tens of thousands of followers, articles on our often-visited website, and analysis provided to the media.

In the event that there are fees, please inform me of the total charges in advance of fulfilling my request. Please also include an explanation of why I was not granted the fee waivers and/or reductions.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation in this matter. I look forward to receiving your response to this request within 20 business days, as the statute requires.

Sincerely,

Alexander Rony
Sierra Club

Filed via MuckRock.com
E-mail (Preferred): 52238-11896979@requests.muckrock.com

For mailed responses, please address (see note):

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